

To: Sylvia Hamilton via email

Date: June 8, 2005

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Subject: **June 3, 2005 Meeting Minutes**

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A meeting of the Perchlorate Community Advisory Group was held at the San Martin Lions Club Hall, 12415 Murphy Avenue, San Martin, on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2005 at 2 pm.

I) Pledge: The Chair, Ms. Sylvia Hamilton, led the Pledge.

II) Administrative Items:

A) Attendee Sign-In Sheet was routed

B) Introductions

C) Additional agenda items:

1. Mr. Craig O'Donnell will be speaking about the protocol of downsized ion-exchange wells in section 3A1cii

D) May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2005 meeting minutes approved with the following corrections:

1. Mr. Rick McClure's suggested changes for section 3A1.

2. Mr. Craig O'Donnell's changes for section 2A5.

III) Presentations/Discussion Topics

A) RWQCB Update (David Athey):

**1. Alternative Water CAO**

(a) **Bottled Water:** Mr. Athey reported that, on May 19<sup>th</sup> the State Water Board adopted the position that bottled water does not have to be delivered to residents with contamination levels at or below 6ppb. However, they also adopted the position that bottled water delivery cannot be stopped until 4 new consecutive quarter samples determine that the levels are low enough to warrant discontinued replacement water. Olin can petition the Regional Board if they believe existing data warrants discontinued water delivery for a particular well. Olin has not yet notified the Regional Board whether it will apply to have bottled water accounts discontinued; the majority of wells do not meet the four consecutive quarterly tests requirement

Mr. Athey reported that the current long term clean up CAO requires Olin to continue to monitor wells even if they are non-detect. The order states that if a well tests between five and six then Olin is obligated to test bi-monthly. They cannot stop supplying bottled water until they have four consecutive monitoring samples below 6 ppb.

(i) Ms. Hamilton requested all attendees to contact her or the RB, if they have not received a report on well samples that Olin has taken, or if they have any other concerns.

Sylvia Hamilton – 408-683-2667 or [sylvialrs@hotmail.com](mailto:sylvialrs@hotmail.com)  
David Athey (RB) – 805-542-4644 or [dathey@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:dathey@waterboards.ca.gov)

**(b) Domestic Well Ion-Exchange Systems:**

- (i) **Schedule:** Mr. Athey reported that the four ion exchange perchlorate removal systems installed by US filter appear to be working and no problems have been reported. The RB does not know Olin's schedule for equipping all wells with treatment units. Ms. Hamilton reiterated the importance of well owners signing the access agreements and giving Olin access to their property to test the wells.
- (ii) **Protocol/Certification:** Mr. Thomas Mohr (SCVWD) reported that he has been facilitating discussions with Department of Health Services (DHS) to explore options for speeding up the testing protocol process for downsized ion-exchange systems. Although Olin has started to use these systems they do not want to install something that is not completely legal and recognized as a way to remove perchlorate from groundwater. In order to fulfill the requirements of the long-term CAO, Olin would like certification soon. US filter has requested that DHS review the acceptability of their ion exchange systems.

**2. Long-Term Groundwater Cleanup CAO:**

- (a) **Llagas Subbasin Monitoring Plan:** Olin submitted their plan last month to the RB. Comments have been received from the Santa Clara Valley Water District, City of Gilroy, and RB. PCAG and other community members are encouraged to comment on the plan. The report is available on the RB's website. Ms. Hamilton added that the public comments are very important to the Regional Board and everyone should make an effort to comment. There is some concern about the types of wells being used to test the extent of perchlorate contamination in the aquifer. It can be argued that private wells are not very accurate in determining the level of contamination because supply wells and monitoring wells are very different. Each is made with its function in mind and therefore since each has a different job. One cannot be expected to do the job of the other. Wells with good geological records tend to give the best results, however, private wells have long well screens which tend to mix water originating from different depths. The new wells Olin is planning will obtain samples from discrete depths using short screen lengths. Each well pair will monitor up to nine discrete depths. If perchlorate is found to be

evenly distributed with depth, that will show that long well screens in private wells do not limit the information obtained when using private wells for monitoring. However, if depth-discrete wells show substantial variation of perchlorate concentration with depth, then private wells will not be helpful for determining which depth zones should be targeted for perchlorate cleanup.

- (b) **High Volume Well Utilization:** High volume wells might be a good candidate for long-term cleanup. Sylvia would like RWQCB to request that Olin focus first on the wells that pump the most water so that some aquifer restoration is achieved when wellhead ion exchange treatment systems are installed.

(c)

- (d) **Northeast Flow Work Plan Progress:** Olin will install their next monitoring well next to Banette Elementary.
- (e) **Tennant Site Soil & Groundwater Test Update:** The highest level of perchlorate contamination in site soils was 12,000 ppb. Olin excavated the most contaminated soils last year and began a bioremediation treatment using soil microbes to break down perchlorate. Olin has met their remediation objectives for the 7,000 – 12,000 ppb contaminated soils on site. All individual data collected is now well below the goal of 50 ppb. In the next phase of soil treatment, Olin will use in-situ bioremediation to treat the remaining lower-level soil contamination. Olin's consultant, Geosyntec, estimates it will take about 2 years to reach the remediation goal.

Q: What is the highest level of soil contamination?

A: Olin was directed to excavate soil higher than 7000 ppb.

- B) **Water District Federal Grants & Project Planning Update (Thomas Mohr):** Mr. Mohr reported that the SCVWD has the opportunity to receive 2.8 million dollars of government funding to aid the process of the long-term cleanup of perchlorate. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in San Francisco will review grant applications and monitor expenditures. SCVWD has to provide EPA with a detailed proposal of how the money will be utilized. Representatives of the SCVWD have taken steps to ensure that the grant money is used towards the most important and worthwhile projects. This includes those projects that are most important to residents, most likely to produce useful results and for projects that could not be required of the discharger. In the first step, five categories of projects were identified. Next, the document was given to residents, various agencies and PCAG for comments as to which projects they feel are most important. Comments were received from many people and organizations. However, most parties answered based on what their particular needs are and not that of the

community at large. For example, private well owners all agreed that private wells should be the focus. Based on the comments, the SCVWD has selected three projects. The three projects will be presented to the SCVWD Board of Directors for approval.

The 3 projects include:

- (1) Perchlorate Source and Background Information: The study strives to answer the big question of whether there is a single source entity responsible for the perchlorate contamination or if there are different sources in the area, which have yet to be identified. Olin Corporation is currently conducting their own investigation into the same issue. However, this project encompasses a wider area and uses advanced chemical techniques (e.g. forensics).
- (2) Proposal for Staffing: There are currently a number of students working with both the Regional Board and SCVWD on various perchlorate projects, such as PCAG. The SCVWD currently has one student assistant, one student engineer and two graduate students working with them. The proposal not only requests students to work with the SCVWD but also with Santa Clara County assisting the Perchlorate Medical Advisory Group (PMAG) and the Regional Board.
- (3) Engineering Feasibility Analysis: The District's water level and water quality data suggest that there is a beneficial effect to operating the Church Avenue recharge ponds. Perchlorate is found in well north and upgradient of the ponds, but only limited low-level detections occur south and downgradient of the ponds. The District has not been able to route water from Llagas Creek to the ponds to continue recharge operations because of fish habitat issues. This study would analyze the best way to resume pond operations while protecting aquatic habitat. The study will also analyze the beneficial effect of recharge on downgradient perchlorate occurrence.

Q: What is success? What level of perchlorate we do accept in the aquifer?

A: It is not acceptable to contaminate the groundwater basin in any way. However, state Water Board Policy allows for cleanup levels to be higher than background in situations where achieving background is technically or economically infeasible. It may be difficult to get state acceptance of a cleanup level higher than background without first restoring all beneficial uses of groundwater. Olin will propose a cleanup level in 2006, as required by the CAO.

IV) Additional Topics

- A) **PWG Update** (Thomas Mohr): The discussion at the last PWG meeting consisted of what position to take in regards to the draft State Board order. The letter with that information can be found on the website.  
[http://www.valleywater.org/Water/Water\\_Quality/Protecting\\_your\\_water/\\_So  
lvents/\\_Files/View\\_Files.cfm](http://www.valleywater.org/Water/Water_Quality/Protecting_your_water/_So%20lvents/_Files/View_Files.cfm) ( Type in 425 for Street number, follow link to Olin case, see Corres\_2005\_3.pdf, pages 9 and 10)

V) Next Meeting

**A) Suggested Agenda Topics:**

- Status report on current agenda items
- Reports from the Cities of Morgan Hill and Gilroy
- Olin's stance on alternative water CAO, whether to use old or new data

- B) Next Meeting **THURSDAY, June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2005 from 7 - 9 pm at the Lions Club Hall**

Meeting was adjourned at 4:10pm

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Minutes submitted by Zohra Karimi